

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, March 23, 1901

SHORTHAND DICTATION Volta Bureau, March 23, 1901. Dear Mabel:

Dined at Elsie's last night, her first dinner party. A very successful dinner — house looked as nice as could be and the dinner was grand ONLY I had to run away in the middle of it to attend the technical meeting of the National Geographic Society at eight o'clock.

We had two meetings yesterday; one at the Congregational Church at 4:20, when we listened to an admirable lecture by Prof. Morse Stevens, upon India. A large audience was present which evidently realized that we can learn from India what to do with the Philippines.

Bert and Elsie had the dinner party for Prof. Stevens, who stayed with them at their house, 1720 21st Street. A little bit of a house and Mr. Stevens (let alone you humble servant) looked like an elephant in a band-box. Elsie was just as pretty as she could be. Present Prof. and Mrs. McGee, Mr. and Mrs. Willis Moore, Elsie and Bert, Prof. Morse Stevens and A. G. B.

The technical meeting of the Society at the Cosmos Club was very interesting and we remained in session from eight until ten o'clock. Three papers were read and enough persons present to make a good audience, a good deal of discussion participated in by the members.

After the meeting I returned to Bert's house where I had an opportunity of talking with Mr. Willis Moore about aqueous vapor ideas — which by the by were not all anticipated by Mr. Daniel 2 in 1845. Mr. Moore seemed much interested and said that the way of looking at the subject was new and should certainly be investigated, and he is going to set the

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Weather Bureau staff at work making meteorological maps for me in which — in addition to the ordinary elements shown upon the weather charts the dew point temperatures will be noted — those places having the same dew point temperatures being connected by a line.

From what he said I conceive that the idea of studying the Highs & Lows of dew point temperature in a manner analogous to the “Highs” and “Lows” of barometric pressure contains some element of novelty and the idea that there is a tendency of aqueous vapor to diffuse from the places of high dew point temperature to the places of low, quite independently of the other atmospheric conditions is an important one. Assuming from the chart the direction of flow of the aqueous vapor, we can see where the dew point temperature should rise, and if the actual dry bulb atmosphere temperatures of these places are too low to permit of the rise, these places should be places of actual deposition.

Mr. Moore is puzzled to know where the rain came from on Inauguration Day. We shall examine the conditions that prevailed about that time, and wouldn't it be a great thing if we should discover the cause of the rain on that day to be an area of high dew-point temperature not far removed from Washington.

One point seemed particularly to strike Mr. Moore, namely, that the place of high dew point temperature is not necessarily or even probably the place of deposition. According to my hypothesis the area of high dew-point temperature is the feeder of the 3 rain which falls elsewhere, and the rain would fall at the place of comparatively low dew-point temperature not high.

Mr. Willis Moore says that the Weather Bureau Experts are constantly noticing that the rain does not fall in the high dew point temperature places but in the low. He is going to start a series of maps right away.

At the Cosmos yesterday I came across Mr. Mauro and made an engagement to meet him there late in the evening. At half past eleven o'clock we came together and I opened up

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to him a subject I have had on my mind for some time, of collecting and PRINTING the pictures of the U. A S . patents relating to flying machines, together with the claims of the inventors. Publications relating to aerial navigation have paid very little attention to the efforts of Americans, and there seems to be no compilation accessible to investigators giving the information concerning U. S. patents upon the subject.

Now, I propose to make a compilation of all the U. S. patents to be printed in pamphlet form for presentation to the members of the Royal Institution in Great Britain upon the occasion of my lecture there; and afterwards to be incorporated as an appendix to MY BOOK which will be placed on sale, and which will contain the substance of my address before the Royal Institution, and some historical notes — not concerning the teaching of speech to the Deaf — but relating to flying machines, &c. &c.

As the work will contain several hundred illustrations, and contain the claims of all patents in all countries, or at all events in the United States, the work will be absolutely necessary to future investigators. It will not only be a pleasure to get it up, but may also be a profit for the Laboratory.

Mr. Mauro has undertaken to collect the patents and is to obtain the estimates from the firm that prints the Patent Office Gazette, relating to the cost of reproducing the illustrations and claims in pamphlet form for me. Mr. Mauro thinks that these U. S. Patents can be reproduced in this way at a cost not exceeding \$300, in which case it might be well to have it done. Copies could be presented to the Royal Institution and afterwards the sale of the proposed book would surely recupe re-coup expenses.

The book will be the basis or support for anything that I may say in the future. It will be a foundation upon which a new structure may be built.

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I had no intention of writing a letter but just asked Miss Safford to take down a few notes in shorthand while I was eating my lunch, but the few notes I am afraid have grown into a volume.

Good bye,

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Volta Bureau, Washington, D. C. March 23, 1901. SHORTHAND DICTATION Dear Mabel:

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